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ABSTRACT

In this practicum, a plan to establish consistency in classroom management was implemented in order to enhance the positive behaviors of preschool and kindergarten children. Participating in the project were 7 classrooms serving 149 preschool and kindergarten children. A total of 14 staff members received inservice training in operant conditioning techniques used to improve student behaviors such as taking turns, helping others, and following directions. Teachers and aides were taught to: (1) define and state operationally each behavior to be changed; (2) obtain a baseline or operant level of the behavior; (3) arrange the learning or treatment situation so that the desirable behavior would occur; (4) identify potential reinforcers; (5) shape and reinforce the desired behavior; and (6) maintain records of the reinforced behavior to determine whether response strength or frequency had increased. Evaluation data indicated that the entire staff followed the established process consistently. Most of the children's parents implemented a follow-up behavior management plan at home. Students exhibited substantially improved self-discipline. Students who had problems meeting competency standards on any of the behavioral items achieved success when parents implemented reinforcement methods at home. (RH)

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A Plan to Establish Consistency in Classroom Management Procedures with Preschool Children

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A Plan to Establish Consistency in Classroom Management Procedures With Preschool Children.

by

Richard A. Napoli

Cluster XVIII

A Practicum II Report
Presented to the Ed.D. Program in
Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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1987

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7/28/87

Date of Final Approval

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ABSTRACT

A Plan to Establish Consistency in Classroom Management Procedures With Preschool Children. Napoli, Richard A., 1987: Practicum Report, Nova University Ed. D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood.
Descriptors: Early Childhood Education / Behavior Problems / Classroom Techniques / Preschool Children / Early Childhood Education

This practicum addressed the need to establish a consistent classroom management process in the designed preschool setting. The goals of this practicum were: (1) to have the preschool staff follow a consistent classroom management plan throughout the school (2) to increase students' positive behavior throughout the school (3) to have parents follow-up behavior management activities at home.

Through the review of the literature the writer decided that a behavioral approach to the problem would be appropriate for the setting. Parents were involved in the implementation of this practicum along with the teachers and students. A total of 149 students ages three through five and 114 households participated in the project. Seven teachers and seven aides attended ten inservice sessions. Five desired student behaviors to be targeted in the project were selected by the teachers and aides of the school. Charts with the set behaviors were placed in each classroom and records were kept on each child. A Star Chart went home weekly to the parents reporting the students' behavior. Reinforcing methods were used both at home and school.

All of the teachers and aides of the school were involved in the implementation of this practicum and received information of ten sessions of inservice. All of the teachers implemented all of the activities required for success. Ninety percent of the parents consistently participated in the follow-up activities at home. Eighty five percent of the students met the competency of all five chart indicators by the end of implementation.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Background Information

This practicum took place at Rock Creek Academy preschool and kindergarten, a private facility. Rock Creek Academy is a school dedicated to providing an environment to meet a child's needs. The school strives to develop positive attitudes and habits as children learn, play and work, with the goal of providing a healthy environment for physical, social and emotional development.

The school is licensed for 149 children. The ethnic background of the children are as follows: 1% black Americans, 2% Asian, 20% Hispanic and 77% white Americans. After-school care is provided with transportation from the surrounding public and parochial elementary schools. Rock Creek Academy has a total of seven classrooms, each class is taught by a certified teacher supported by experienced aides. Rock Creek Academy provides services from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. There are three separate programs offered for children who are entering a school environment for the first time. A two day program, a three day program and a five day program are offered.

The children attending Rock Creek Academy are between the ages of 2-6 years old. They are given the opportunity to experience various levels of development such as: dressing correctly (e.g. tie their shoes), art, storytime, songs, cooking, outdoor and indoor playtime, snack-time and lunch. The after-school program is attended by children between the ages of 7-12 years old. A variety of stimulating activities are planned for small and large groups such as: arts and crafts, dance, music, cooking, physical fitness, supervised homework, sports and field trips.

Community Information

The southeastern section of Florida, known as the "Gold Coast" encompassing Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties, is a major resort area with miles of beaches on the Atlantic Ocean, and numerous recreational activities complimented by year round warm weather. The population of Broward County has increased at an annual rate of 5.1 percent to a level of 1,018,200 in 1980 from 620,000 in 1970. The population during 1981 increased to an estimated 1,047,300, and to 1,067,044 during 1982. The number of housing units doubled from 1970 to 1980 over 415,300. Of this total, approximately 7.5 percent are held for seasonal or occasional use.

Much of the growth in Broward County has been in the

western areas. Some of the pressures upon local government caused by rapid growth include, too few roads which caused overcrowding upon the existing roads, an inadequate school system and a dramatic run-up in real estate property values. The median price range for new single family housing was $90,186 as of June 1983 for Broward County, according to Appraisal and Real Estate Economics, Inc.

When compared to other areas of the nation that have had rapid growth, and have gone through similar trends as south Florida, it is believed that this area will become a great place to live. The recent increase in housing units, and population which have taken place in Broward County have been in the western portions of the county primarily because the eastern locations have been developed previously. The enactment of the Broward County Land Use Plan during 1977, has helped control growth in an orderly manner. It provides for roads, public services, and land set aside for parks and future educational facilities.

Examples of the more recent quality developments are Rock Creek, a Planned Unit Development (P.U.D), located within the City of Cooper City, Broward County, Florida. Rock Creek, will contain almost one square mile of single family and townhouse residents, inhabited by mostly younger working couples; Pembroke Lakes, in the City of Pembroke Pines, Broward County, Florida, nearby to the south of Rock

Creek consists of townhouses and single family homes inhabited by similar type families as Rock Creek. Both these subdivisions are currently being expanded with new townhomes and single family residences. The development west of Rock Creek consists primarily of single family homes on one acre and larger sites. Flamingo Lakes is a large single family development located just north of Rock Creek. These areas provide an excellent location for business people from the east areas of Broward County, and from the northern sections of Dade County, who choose to live in an area consisting of well planned and maintained neighborhoods in comparison to the older residential neighborhoods to the east. Southwest Broward County is more family oriented than many of the easterly neighborhoods which cater to retirees and pre-retirees, or adults only.

Rock Creek Academy preschool and kindergarten caters to children from the surrounding areas described. After school children are transported by bus from four public elementary schools and three parochial schools. In summation, Rock Creek Academy children are from an area being developed with quality single family and townhouse type homes inhabited by younger working families.

The Writer

The writer is the owner and administrator of Rock

Creek Academy preschool and kindergarten, which was designed and built from a dream to reality. As administrator, the writer performs such tasks as personnel management, curriculum coordinator, bookkeeping, payroll preparation, ordering of classroom and school supplies.

The writer has a varied background with children and adults of all ages. The writer has a master's degree in social work from Barry University, Miami Shores, Florida. The writer retired in March of 1985 following 20 years of service as a sergeant of Police for the City of Miami Police Department preceded by five years of service with the New York City Transit Police Department. In 1973, the writer was chosen Outstanding Police Officer of the year and has received numerous awards and citations for meritorious and exemplary police work and exemplary police work beyond the call of duty, working in many different roles from uniformed patrol work with a K-9, to undercover vice officer, internal affairs and homicide investigator to supervisor.

The writer performed internships for the school of social work in several different programs counseling children and adults for the Criminal Justice Department in Broward County; the Victim Witness Program, the Citizen's Dispute Settlement Program, the Juvenile Division Program and Probation Services. The writer also interned at the

Mailman Center for Child Development at Jackson Memorial Hospital. In this setting the writer received extensive experiences with clinic teams working with clients and families in the areas of Mental and Child Health, Mental Retardation, Developmental Disabilities and other handicapping conditions. On a practice skill level, the writer demonstrated competencies in developing psychosocial histories, in psychosocial and biological diagnosis and in treatment techniques covering emotional support, mobilizing community resources, clarification and relationship therapy.

CHAPTER II

Study of the Problem

Problem Statement

Rock Creek Academy is a school dedicated to providing an environment to meet a child's needs. The school strives to develop positive attitudes and habits as children learn, play and work with the hope of providing an environment for physical, social and emotional development. The need to establish consistency in classroom management to enhance positive behavior in the children was undetected or ignored as a classroom management problem in the school. The existence of this problem was a cause of anxiety and frustration not only on the part of the staff but the parents and most of all the children in need. Some specific details of the problems were that some children could not function effectively at their level of cognitive development; some children were not able to work effectively with other children in the setting due to the lack of development of social skills. The staff had not been sufficiently instructed to follow a consistent behavior management program throughout the school. Some

children were receiving instructions from two different teachers with different behavior management techniques. There were no guidelines established in order to implement a consistent classroom management plan.

Briefly stated, the problem was that at Rock Creek Academy a consistent method of classroom management had not been established throughout the school. Inconsistency in the expectations and standards of classroom behavior demanded by teachers and the different classroom management styles created confusion in the child's responsiveness to the teachers which interfered with the children's schooling and socialization.

Evidence of the Problem

There was evidence that there was a need for consistent classroom management throughout the school. Teachers had expressed their concerns at staff meetings, as to the different styles of classroom management among the teachers, causing inconsistency and confusion in the children. A questionnaire (Appendix A) was given to the teachers in the school and the results were as follows:

1. Teachers were not familiar with classroom management styles of other teachers in the school.

2. There was no set behavior expectancies established throughout the school.

3. Students seemed to be confused as to what kind of

behavior was expected of them.

4. A consistent behavior management plan throughout the school would be beneficial to the children.

A faculty meeting was held at Rock Creek Academy at the conclusion of the school year and the staff raised the following concerns:

a. There was no consistency in classroom management techniques.

b. Some children received instruction from two different teachers with different behavior management techniques.

c. There was no guidelines established in order to implement a consistent classroom management plan.

Causes of the Problem

Orton (1982) stated that emotional problems play an important role in school achievement; it is vital to mention some of these problems which cause other behavior problems. The first of these problems is the child's conscious refusal to learn, where the child feels hostility towards his parents and teachers, hostility which is consciously realized and readily expressed, and the child rejects activities. This frequently occurs when there is a conflict between the cultural values of teachers and the pupil. The child in this case may be from a low socioeconomic background and may not be willing to accept

the goals which the teachers approve.

Overt hostility is another problem where self-control is hard to maintain because the child has built up intense feelings of resentment, and his/her angry feelings are apt to breakout with relatively little provocation. For children of this type, a good teacher-pupil relationship is of great importance and conducive to a good learning situation.

Negative conditioning to proper behavior occurs where the child has built up a negative emotional response through normal principles of learning by association. Some children show a displacement of hostility where the child may be jealous of a favored brother or sister who is doing very well and his/her hostility becomes transferred to proper behavior which is the sibling's strong point. Resistance to pressure is exemplified by the over ambitious parents who want their child to be "the best".

The child who is overprotected and babied, may consciously or unconsciously, prefer to remain infantile and get attention through helplessness. Here the child clings to dependency and learning independence may mean growing up and becoming self-reliant which the child is not yet ready to attempt.

Some children start off with the desire to be

successful, but meet quick discouragement after some initial difficulty and quickly give up and stop trying. Their home life fails to provide them with security and affection. Often they come from broken homes in which much quarreling and little love takes place. Many of them have the feeling that their parents do not care for them. In some children with deep-lying emotional problems almost any successful form of self-expression may stir-up feelings of anxiety and distress, related to unconscious fears of destruction or damage.

A high degree of tension in a child may build up an uncontrolable physical activity. The child who is easily distracted or restless is likely to fall behind in learning, and once he is aware of being behind, quick discouragement is likely to set in.

Some children are absorbed in thoughts of their own to such an extent that they give only intermittent attention to their environments, and cannot devote the sustained attention needed for good learning. Some of these problems can be considered social since they take place in the home and at school which the child attends.

A faculty meeting was held at Rock Creek Academy at the conclusion of the school year and the staff raised the following concerns:

a. There was no consistency in classroom management

techniques.

b. Some children received instruction from two different teachers with different behavior management techniques.

c. There were no guidelines established in order to implement a consistent classroom management plan.

There were many contributing factors to the reasons why some children do not behave well in school.

In brief the major causes of the problem were:

(1) A method of classroom management had not been established.

(2) There was a lack of consistency in classroom management styles by the staff.

Jacobs (1985) stated that behavior control in the classroom is necessary for effective instruction. While different teachers may effectively use different techniques to establish behavior control, overall, there is a need for a systematic plan. Jacobs designed a two-step approach based on published research. The first step described systematic strategies for managing group behavior. The second step described procedures for dealing with individual students whose inappropriate behavior has not changed through the group management plan.

Mates (1975) stated that in a behavioral program for teachers, it is of crucial importance that certain types of

consistency be maintained among the staff members. One can readily speculate about the confusion that could have resulted if different staff members would have actually rewarded or punished quite different acts of behavior, or if a single staff member would have rewarded and punished similar behaviors on separate occasions.

Review of the Literature

The idea of behavior management in the preschool years has posed many concerns and problems for educators. In reality, there are underlying factors which cause many problems and controversies about the type of consistent behavior management techniques used for children with classroom behavior difficulties.

One very prevalent problem which causes much controversy is defining the characteristics which differentiate consistent behavior management for the preschooler from the average toddler. Another controversial subject is deciding which behavioral technique to implement and how valid or reliable are these techniques in predicting a child's success or failure in school.

Behavior modification is being used quite frequently in our educational system. The classroom teacher's behavior influences the children's behavior. Knowingly or not, teachers influence many of the consequences of their

pupil's behavior. Teachers smile and frown, praise and criticize, ignore and reward. By providing certain kinds of consequences, teachers can influence as well as modify their pupils' behavior. There is no inherent value orientation to the methodology of behavior modification. Therefore each teacher can personalize the approach he/she uses to coincide with his/her value orientation and judgement, thus influencing children's behavior.

Lerner (1976) defines behavior modification as a systematic arrangement of environmental events to produce a specific change in observable behavior. The behavior modification approach to studying human behavior is an outgrowth of the concept of operant conditioning developed by learning theorists such as B.F. Skinner. When the concepts and procedures of operant conditioning and reinforcement theory were applied to human beings, it was called behavior modification. Teachers observed that these methods can be used to modify and shape the child's behavior and learning pattern, although this method has been used more frequently with children exhibiting emotional and social problems.

Abidid (1971) addressed some issues and problems which must be evaluated and dealt with before and during application of behavior modification techniques. There are three steps which must be considered as pre-conditions to

the instrumentation of a successful behavior modification program:

Step 1. The teachers' teaching style and personality in relation to the demands of the behavior modification program to be instituted must be evaluated.

Sulzer (1972) stated that for any given behavior modification program to be effective, it is necessary that the appropriate contingencies be applied. Looking back at their own learning histories, some teachers may be able to apply one set of contingencies more easily than others. For instance some teachers will have had years of experience in using positive reinforcement effectively, while others will have learned to apply aversive techniques with sufficient precision to be able to achieve many educational goals. It is usually easier for those with experience in positive reinforcement to use such procedures as shaping, differential reinforcement, and reinforcement of incompatible behaviors. Conversely, it is usually easier for those with experience in using aversive techniques to use punishment, response cost, time out, and negative reinforcement. This does not mean that it is useless for the individual adept in the application of aversive stimuli to attempt to apply the positive procedures. It does suggest however, that it may delay the result.

Step 2. The teacher must be familiar with the basic principles of behavior. The basic concepts necessary in the behavior modification program must also be learned.

Andrews (1969) reports that teachers are able to successfully implement many aspects of behavior modification after attending four to five in-service sessions. Also, many of the functions necessary for an adequately designed program can be delegated to others. For instance, parents, teachers' aides, or older students can be trained to administer specific instrumental programs. Teachers can be taught to deliver social reinforcement, to help administer token systems, to graph data, to organize materials, and to perform other duties; as long as their tasks are specified clearly and they are given supervised practice, such persons can be trained to perform their functions extremely well.

Step 3. Teachers appear to vary greatly in their readiness and willingness to use positive reinforcers. Even more pressing is the problem of providing social reinforcers that will maintain the behavior of the teacher. Many other studies indicate that it is possible to train teachers to use positive social reinforcers to alter the behavior of children. The problem is , how is the behavior of the teacher to be maintained over the lengthy period of time it takes to establish lasting changes in child

behavior?

Brown, Montgomery and Barclay (1969) suggested that unless a great deal of reinforcement is supplied to the teacher, the teacher may not maintain the desired behavior modification strategy with the child. In one case study, the rate of positive reinforcement supplied by the two teachers for a deviant boy was graphed. In the first phase, their natural style of reinforcement was recorded. In a second phase, a psychologist reinforced the teachers' for their reinforcing behavior. In a subsequent third period, the psychologist stopped reinforcing the teachers. In a fourth phase, he again supplied reinforcement to the teachers. A graph of these four stages showed a dramatic drop in the teachers' use of positive reinforcement with the child, precisely during the stage when the psychologist stopped reinforcing the teachers. Subsequently, there was a dramatic resurgence in reinforcement of the child when the teachers were again given positive reinforcement by the psychologist. In turn, the child's incidence of deviant behavior was a mirror image of the teachers' behavior. As the psychologist reinforced the teachers, they gave much more positive reinforcement to the boy, and his deviancy decreased. As soon as the teachers stopped reinforcing the boys positive behavior, his deviancy rate climbed. As soon as the psychologist resumed rewarding the teachers, they

rewarded the boy for good behavior, and his deviancy fell off dramatically.

It should be noted that most of the experiments with this strategy have dealt only with "problem children". Consequently, generalization of the method to most school situations remains an untested proposition, especially in preschool situations.

Patterson (1971) remarks that alterations in child behavior are simply not all that reinforcing for the teacher, even when the new strategy is successful, and that many teachers probably will not maintain the strategy after the termination of training. He suggests that the permanence of such training might be considerably more effective if teachers' salaries were contingent on their ability to maintain the desired behavior. Patterson makes a valid point when he notes that the problem of effective reinforcers for teachers has gone almost totally unconsidered and that it is a crucial problem in designing programs of this kind that will actually work and keep on working.

Abidin (1971) specifies three common process errors in a behavior modification program:

Error 1. The failure to define the problem behavior on both the operational level and on a feeling tone. A teachers' initial statement of a problem might be "Johnny

disrupts the class". Hopefully after the observation, the school psychologist might be able to help the teacher see that "disrupts" may be operationally defined by the number of times Johnny is out of his seat. Often the teachers' natural inclination in setting up a contingency program is to tell the child that she doesn't want him to "disrupt the class". The child may find this difficult to understand, is talking too loudly or softly disrupting the class? The target behavior must be clearly defined.

Error 2. The failure to collect baseline data. It has been found that collecting baseline data often leads to a redefinition of the problem. The teacher may believe she recognizes the problem, but in the course of having to attend closely to the child's behavior, she will often find that the behavior she is counting may not be the one that is most disturbing to her, or that it occurs so seldom as to be less important than some other behavior. Having a baseline and then noting changes from the baseline, once a response contingency contract has been developed, tends to provide a clear picture of the reinforcers' efficacy.

Sarason (1972) suggested that a baseline is usually taken for several days or weeks in order to allow for day to day variations and to derive reliable estimates of the frequency and intensity of behavior.

Error 3. Ineffective or inappropriate reinforcers.

Often a teacher assumes he has a reinforcer and makes this "reinforcer" contingent upon some behavior, then nothing happens. The only way that we know that response is a contingent event in reinforcing is the extent to which it modifies the behavior. It is felt that three steps must be taken in attempting to locate reinforcers for a given child:

a. Observe what the child does and what he likes.

b. Ask him/her what would be reinforcing for him/her.

c. Set up a reinforcing menu not just one item.

The teacher must remember that reinforcers change in their reinforcing strength with time. This expected change must be fully recognized in advance.

Bond and Dykstra (1967) concluded that the teacher is the most important variable in a child's learning.

Chall and Feldman's (1966) studies revealed that children in certain classes do better than others, regardless of the methods or materials used, even when the data is controlled for intelligence and socioeconomic levels. The most important component in these situations was not the materials nor methods but the teacher.

Koppitz (1973) concluded that negative behavior cannot be corrected or "cured" by a specific teaching method or training technique. It is imperative that teachers have a wide range of instructional materials and techniques at

their disposal, and that they are imaginative and flexible enough to adapt these specific needs of their pupils.

The research emphasizes that reinforcement must be two-fold, that is, ample positive reinforcement must be available to the teacher so that she in turn will generate positive reinforcement to her students.

CHAPTER III

Anticipated Outcomes and Evaluation Instruments

Goals

The goal of the writer's practicum was to have the staff of Rock Creek Academy follow a consistent classroom management plan throughout the school; students' positive behavior would increase throughout the school; parents would follow-up with behavior management activities at home with their child.

The following objectives were projected for this practicum:

1. 100% of the staff will attend 100% of the in-service sessions.
2. 100% of the staff will implement all the activities in the behavior management plan.
3. 90% of the parents will implement a follow-up behavior management plan at home.
4. 95% of the students will exhibit an improvement of consistent acceptable behavior.

THE END RESULT	EVALUATION TOOL	STANDARD OF ACHIEVEMENT
Staff will receive in-service training for classroom management techniques.	In-service attendance records.	100% of the staff will attend 100% of the in-service sessions.
Staff will implement all the activities in the behavior management plan.	Checklist.	100% of the staff will implement all the activities.
Parents will implement follow-up behavior management plan at home.	Parent questionnaire.	90% of the parents will implement the all of the activities at home.
Students will exhibit acceptable behavior throughout the day.	Classroom charts.	95% of the students will exhibit 95% of behaviors listed in the chart 95% of the time.

Evaluation Instruments

The four instruments that were to be used in this practicum were, an in-service attendance form, a checklist, parent questionnaire, and classroom charts.

In-service Attendance Form (Appendix B) - This form was developed to keep an account of which

teachers had received all of the in-service training.

Checklist (Appendix C) - A checklist was to be kept to show that the staff was implementing all the activities. The writer in turn would fill out a checklist for each teacher monthly.

Parent Questionnaire (Appendix D) - This questionnaire was to be used as a follow-up to monitor the parents progress while implementing the activities at home. The questionnaire would be sent to the parents of those children identified by the teachers as needing socially acceptable behavior.

Classroom Charts (Appendix E) - A 30"x40" chart was to be displayed in each of the classrooms. These charts were to be completed by each teacher daily depicting the exhibited behavior of the children throughout the day. The chart would include a list of the desired behaviors and a place with every child's name to be checked daily.

CHAPTER IV

Solution Strategy

Possible Solution

A solution to the problem selected in this practicum would be to hire more personnel to decrease the student teacher ratio, but this would be too costly. Another solution would be for the teachers to enroll in a university for additional training; this would be time consuming. A possible solution would be to develop a classroom management plan to be followed consistently throughout the school.

Harris (1979) stated that disordered behavior can be both a cause and a result of disabilities in perception and communication. It is suggested that goals be defined in terms of the abilities and needs of the child, and worked in with the regular program.

Shure (1978) designed a program to improve behavior characteristics of impulsivity and inhibition by enhancing children's real-life problem solving thinking skills. This program was provided for parents of four and five-year-old children.

Chazan (1983) developed and field tested a handbook for a nursery school staff on the management of children's behavior problems. The handbook discusses play activity, behavior modification, and problem-solving approaches to intervention.

Powers (1983) examined the effects of brief time out on the biting behavior of a 21-month-old boy enrolled in a day care setting. Treatment consisted of time out used contingently with instances of or attempts at biting others. The incidence of biting decreased considerably.

Camp (1978) adapted the "Think Aloud" method designed to assist young aggressive boys in achieving greater self-control, to improve problem-solving skills among first and second graders.

Blackham and Silberman (1971) discussed the theoretical cornerstones for promoting behavior change that is, behavior is learned for two reasons. First, behavior is learned in order to terminate a condition that is noxious, distressing, or painful. Second, behavior is learned in order to induce positive sensations or lead to some satisfying state. In addition, they discussed respondent and operant conditioning as they apply to behavior change. First, a measurement of the operant level or baseline is taken. Second, a reinforcer is presented each time the response is performed until the operant rate

has clearly increased. Third, the reinforcer is withheld to permit the conditioned response to become extinguished. If the conditioned response is extinguished, then there is some certainty that appropriate variables have been identified.

Mates (1975) stated that a caregiver who places fewer demands on the problem-child, leading him to engage in the undesired activity again, may find other children trying to imitate his negative behavior. Positive steps that can lead to a reduction of undesirable activity were discussed in the paper, e.g. keeping attention to a minimum, understanding the conditions, explaining the rules, using praise, showing a model, using time-out.

Chazan (1983) discussed a study of 82 children having special behavioral needs. It was found that children who were restless, aggressive or demanding in other ways tended to receive more contacts from the adults in the classroom than did other children, but most of these contacts were disciplinary or prohibitory in nature; withdrawn children, on the other hand, received insufficient adult-initiated help and encouragement, largely because they did not know how to attract attention successfully. The high proportion of time spent in child-directed activities in the classroom made matters worse for those children who did not know how to make use of the available adults as resources.

Educators don't have to think about behavior long to realize that the reason discipline and classroom management are such perennial favorites is that people are so much more complicated than things. Curriculum has its problems but, at least, a textbook will remain the same once it's committed to print. A student on the other hand will be one way today and another way tomorrow. As a result of the ever-shifting nature of human interaction, teachers spend a lot of their worry time not knowing what they ought to do with one or more individuals who are slowly driving them out of their minds. In conclusion, the related literature discussed the understanding of the components of human behavior interaction and becoming familiar with specific strategies for controlling student behavior.

Solution Selected

After taking into consideration the discussed solutions, the writer decided to give in-service training for the teachers to discuss the basic procedures in conditioning operant behavior. The writer met with the teachers monthly thereafter to get feedback from the teachers on the plan and ideas for the reinforcers to be used to condition the children with the desired behavior.

The following six basic procedures were discussed at the initial in-service for the teacher:

1. Define and state operationally the behavior to be

changed.

2. Obtain a baseline or operant level of the behavior that is considered desirable to promote or change.

3. Arrange the learning or treatment situation so that the desirable behavior will occur.

4. Identify potential reinforcers.

5. Shape and reinforce the desired behavior.

6. Maintain records of the reinforced behavior to determine whether response strength or frequency has increased.

Six desired behaviors expected from the students were compiled by the teachers at a faculty meeting. Before implementation the teachers had an additional faculty meeting and agreed to work on five sets of behavior instead of the six stated at the time of the proposal. This change was approved by the administration of the school compromising with the teachers. The list of desired student behaviors were posted in each class with a place for a daily check-up by the teachers. Students complying with the set behaviors received a star for the day (Appendix E).

A star was awarded at the end of each day for those children who demonstrated the five desired behaviors throughout the day. As a backup reinforcement a "star chart" (Appendix F) went home weekly with the student and

the parent was to reinforce his/her good behavior in school by giving him/her a reward at home. The following suggested list of reinforcers was sent home to the parents:

1. raisins
2. nuts
3. cereal
4. cookies and milk
5. juice
6. story telling time
7. watching television
8. play with favorite toy
9. a special trip
10. special projects

The list is endless and only the parents would know what was the best rewarding snack or activity for their child. At the end of each week the students were rewarded accordingly at school. The first month students with the most stars were rewarded with a special story time at the end of the week.

At monthly meetings teachers would decide if the children had acquired the set of desired behaviors and also would decide if other desired behaviors should be added to the list. Through implementation the teachers decided to keep working on the five stated behaviors for consistency. At the meetings the teachers would also decide what

reinforcers could be used the following month.

Teachers' implementation of the plan was documented and monitored by this writer with a checklist. Parent questionnaires were checked each month for feedback on parent follow-up of activities at home. The writer checked the classroom charts used by the teachers to track the students' behavior.

Students enjoyed the "game like" structure of the implementation process. All the classrooms consistently implemented the designed activities in their classroom creating continuity in the child's daily schedule. A chart for each student was placed weekly in each of the classroom listing the five desired behaviors. Throughout the day the students were given the opportunity to manifest these behaviors and were reinforced with a golden star next to their names in their respective charts. Students would place their own star in the cards and this became highly motivational. At the end of the day students would receive reinforcers according to the number of stars received during the day. At the end of the week a "Star Chart" would be sent home for parents to do follow-up reinforcement at home for desired behaviors. Parents at times would write in the chart a particular behavior which they were trying to work out with their child.

Haswell (1982) described techniques for minimizing

resistance of preschool children in situations where compliance was necessary. Suggestions included being flexible when making transitions, giving verbal alerts about transitions, offering choices, giving children time to comply, acting positively, and using time out. Some of these techniques were introduced at the monthly in-service sessions and utilized in the classroom during the implementation of this practicum.

Calendar of Events

July 23, 1986 - Submitted proposal.

August 18-29, 1986 - Planned activities for September.

September 2, 1986 - Informed parents of follow-up plan.

September 3, 1986 - In-serviced teachers for monthly activities.

September 26, 1986 - Checked feed-back from parents.

September 29, 1986 - Checked teachers completion of activities.

September 30, 1986 - Checked students' behavior charts.

October 1, 1986 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

October 24, 1986 - Checked feedback from parents.

October 30, 1986 - Checked teachers completion of activities.

October 31, 1986 - Checked students' behavior charts.

November 3, 1986 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

November 21, 1986 - Checked feedback from parents.

November 25, 1986 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

November 26, 1986 - Checked students' behavior charts.

December 1, 1986 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

December 19, 1986 - Checked feedback from parents.

December 22, 1986 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

December 23, 1986 - Checked students' behavior charts.

January 5, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

January 23, 1987 - Checked feedback from

parents.

January 29, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

January 30, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

February 2, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

February 20, 1987 - Checked feedback from parents.

February 26, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

February 27, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

March 2, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

March 20, 1987 - Checked feedback from parents.

March 26, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

March 27, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

April 1, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

April 24, 1987 - Checked feedback from parents.

April 29, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

April 30, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

May 4, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

May 22, 1987 - Checked feedback from parents.

May 28, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

May 29, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

June 1, 1987 - Feedback meeting for planning monthly activities.

June 13, 1987 - Checked feedback from parents.

June 17, 1987 - Checked teachers' completion of activities.

June 18, 1987 - Checked students' behavior charts.

July 1, 1987 - Submitted final practicum report.

Chapter V

Results

In this practicum a plan to establish consistency in classroom management was implemented in order to enhance positive behavior in the children. Seven classrooms participated in this project, serving 149 children. Fourteen staff members received inservice training in order to implement a comprehensive and consistent program (Appendix B). At the conclusion of implementation it was recorded that the entire staff followed the established process consistently. Most of the parents implemented a follow-up behavior management plan at home. Students exhibited remarkable improvement on self-discipline during implementation of this practicum. It was noted that students who had problems meeting competency on any of the chart items (Appendix E) had success sooner when an adult in the household would do follow-up behavior activities at home.

The first objective stated that 100% of the staff would attend 100% of the in-service sessions. There were ten in-service sessions offered throughout the year. The

seven teachers attended the ten sessions of training. Of the seven aides, five attended the ten sessions, one attended nine sessions and one attended eight sessions. The classroom teachers met with those aides who did not attend some of the sessions to ensure that they would receive the necessary information (Appendix B).

The second objective stated that 100% of the staff would implement all of the activities in the behavior management plan. A checklist for each staff member was kept by the writer in order to record implementation of the activities. The records showed that the seven classrooms implemented all the activities for the ten months (Appendix C).

The third objective stated that 90% of the parents would implement a follow-up behavior management plan at home. Of the 149 households, 114 followed through with the plan at home in a consistent manner. Approximately 78% completed the tasks (Appendix D).

The fourth objective stated that 95% of the children would exhibit consistent acceptable behavior. Results show that progress in meeting desirable behavior was slower in the two-year-old group. At-home follow-up activities with this age group did not make as much difference as it did with the three-, four- and five-year-old children. Students in the four- and five-year-old group showed the

most progress in meeting the desirable behaviors especially when the households participated in the follow-up home activities. In the two-year-old group 75% of the students had met the compentency of the five chart indicators by the end of implementation, 25% followed an inconsistent behavior pattern throughout implementation. In the three-year-old group 87% of the students had met the competency of the five chart indicators by the end of implementation, 13% followed an inconsistent behavior pattern throughout implementation. In the four- and five-year-old group 93% of the students had met the competency of the five chart indicators by the end of implementation, 7% of the students followed an inconsistent behavior pattern throughout implementation. In conclusion, 85% of the participating students had met 100% competency of the five chart indicators by the end of implementation. The first week of implementation only 75% of students participating met complete or partial competency of the five chart indicators (Appendix G).

Conclusion

Parental involvement in this project was very beneficial for both students and the parents. There was a relationship established between the home, the student and the school. A summary view of the results as presented in this paper would indicate that the solution strategy

selected was effective in providing a positive atmosphere among students, teachers and parents.

Students were given the opportunity to place the stars in the classroom charts when the desired behaviors were displayed by the students. Ohlson (1976) stated that having the preschool child as a participator, the teacher has a prime opportunity to use the behavior modification techniques of successive approximation, reinforcement, and stimulus. The classroom setting became more challenging and improvement in behavior was manifested by the students with a positive attitude. Merrett (1978) tested the hypothesis that a classroom teacher can, with a minimum of assistance, apply a "game" contingency to control the maladaptive behaviors of students and that this could be applied without upsetting the informality of the classroom or the teacher's on-going instructional function. In this practicum, the students accomplished a set of desirable behaviors using a pleasant "game-like" process which had them actively involved and reinforced the desired behavior both in school and at home.

Parents expressed to the writer the success that the project had on their children's behavior both at school and at home. Teachers also stated their interest in continuing a similar program during the following school year.

In conclusion, the writer believes that this project

was successful in training the staff in a successful process of consistent classroom management. Furthermore, the students showed a consistent acceptance of the desired behaviors both at home and at school. Those parents following up the method at home found that they could achieve other desired behaviors from their child by using the same techniques in different situations.

Recommendations

1. Duplication of this project using an experimental and a control group would be beneficial to find the true effectiveness of the project implementation.

2. Involve parents in providing some of the reinforcement in the school setting.

3. Have parent conferences with those parents not participating in order to explain the benefits of their involvement.

4. Have a monthly recognition for those parents that followed up program at home with their child.

5. Modify desired behaviors according to age level.

Dissemination Plans

1. The writer will encourage other preschool programs to involve themselves in a similar program by sharing their results.

2. The writer will make presentations and conduct workshops for other preschool educators.

3. The writer will implement a similar program in the school the following year.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

Teacher Questionnaire
Responses

1. I am familiar with classroom management styles used by other teachers in the school.

   5 teachers responded "never"
   2 teachers responded "seldom"

2. Students behavior expectations are established throughout the school.

   2 teachers responded "sometimes"
   4 teachers responded "seldom"
   1 teacher responded "never"

3. Students seem confused on what is expected of them.

   6 teachers responded "sometimes"
   1 teachers responded "always"

4. A consistant behavior management plan throughout the school would be beneficial to the children.

   7 teachers responded "always"

APPENDIX B

IN-SERVICE ATTENDANCE FORM

Number of Inservice Sessions
Attended by Teachers and Aides.

Teacher #1 - 10
Aide #1 - 10

Teacher #2 - 10
Aide #2 - 9

Teacher #3 - 10
Aide #3 - 10

Teacher #4 - 10
Aide #4 - 10

Teacher #5 - 10
Aide #5 - 8

Teacher #6 - 10
Aide #6 - 10

Teacher #7 - 10
Aide #7 - 10

APPENDIX C

CHECKLIST

CHECKLIST

Observations

	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
IN-SERVICE ATTENDANCE	7/7	7/6	7/7	7/6	7/7	7/6	7/7	7/7	7/7	7/7
CHART	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
REWARDS	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7

APPENDIX D

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE (responses)

This questionnaire was sent to each of the participating households each month for a period of ten months.

1. Have you been carrying out the plan?

- 114 households responded "yes" 10 times
- 27 households responded "yes" 6 to 9 times
- 8 households responded "yes" less than 6 times

2. Have you seen any positive reactions as a result of the plan?

- 114 households responded "yes" 10 times
- 27 households responded "yes" 6 to 9 times
- 8 households responded "yes less than 6 times

3. Have you found the plan to be useful and should it be continued?

- 114 households responded "yes" 10 times
- 27 households responded "yes 6 to 9 times
- 8 households responded "yes" less than 6 times

APPENDIX E

CLASSROOM CHART ITEMS

CLASSROOM CHART RESULTS

(Results)

1. Plays cooperatively or competitively as appropriate.

- 2 year-old group - 75% met competency
- 3 year-old group - 87% met competency
- 4-5 year-old group - 93% met competency

2. Takes turns in use of toys and materials when free to control own actions.

- 2 year-old group - 75% met competency
- 3 year-old group - 87% met competency
- 4-5 year-old group - 93% met competency

3. Helps children and adults spontaneously.

- 2 year-old group - 75% met competency
- 3 year-old group - 87% met competency
- 4-5 year-old group - 93% met competency

4. Follows adult direction without complaint.

- 2 year-old group - 75% met competency
- 3 year-old group - 87% met competency
- 4-5 year-old group - 93% met competency

5. Senses accurately the emotions of other people.

- 2 year-old group - 75% met competency
- 3 year-old group - 87% met competency
- 4-5 year-old group - 93% met competency

APPENDIX -F

"STAR CHART"

STUDENT'S NAME Joey Smith

	COMMENTS
Sunday ☐	
Monday ★	Joey is doing great in school.
Tuesday ★	Joey takes turns when using toys and materials.
Wednesday ★	Joey is very helpful in the classroom.
Thursday ★	Great job following directions!
Friday ★	This has been a fantastic week for Joey in school.
Saturday ☐	

APPENDIX G

STUDENT BEHAVIOR
RESULTS

* RESULTS *
Students' Attainment of Desired Behaviors

TWO-YEAR-OLD GROUP

Classroom #1 - 20 students
Classroom #2 - 20 students
Total - 40 students

Number of students meeting competency of the five chart indicators: 30 students

THREE-YEAR-OLD GROUP

Classroom #3 - 21 students
Classroom #4 - 21 students
Classroom #5 - 21 students

Total - 63 students

Number of students meeting competency of the five chart indicators: 55 students

FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLD GROUP

Classroom #6 - 23 students
Classroom #7 - 23 students

Total - 46 students

Number of students meeting competency of the five chart indicators: 43 students